

Chronology

BC

- 594 Constitutional reforms of Solon at Athens.
Mid-sixth century, Athens ruled by a tyranny.
- c.540 Heraclitus born at Ephesus.
- 533 First competition for the best tragedies held at Athens.
- 514 Hipparchus murdered by Harmodius and Aristogiton.
- 510 Hippias expelled from Athens.
- 508 Political reforms at Athens, leading to the foundation of democracy.
- 499 Ionia revolts unsuccessfully against Persian rule.
- 490 Persians invade Greece and are defeated at Marathon.
- 486 First competition for the best comedies held at Athens.
- 484 Aeschylus (b. 525) wins his first victory in the tragedy competitions.
- 480 Persians invade Greece for the second time, but after victory at Thermopylae suffer defeat at Salamis and Plataea. This date is taken as marking the beginning of the classical period of ancient Greece.
- 469 Socrates born.

468	Sophocles (b.c.496) wins his first victory in the tragedy competitions.
465	Euripides (b.c.485) first competes in the tragedy competitions.
461–429	Pericles, the Athenian democratic politician, most influential.
451	Alcibiades born.
450 (or earlier)	Aristophanes born.
445 (or a little earlier)	Agathon born.
431	Start of the Peloponnesian war between Sparta and Athens.
430	Plague at Athens.
429	Pericles dies of plague.
427 (or a little later)	Plato born.
424	Athens defeated at battle of Delium.
422	Spartan general Brasidas killed.
416	Agathon wins his first tragedy competition. The ‘dramatic’ date of the <i>Symposium</i> .
415	Athens decides to send an expedition to win control of Sicily, with Alcibiades as one of the generals. The profanation of the mysteries and the mutilation of the herms.
415–413	Sicilian expedition. Alcibiades is soon recalled to Athens but escapes into exile.
411	Democracy at Athens temporarily overthrown by oligarchic (aristocratic) revolutionaries known as ‘the Four Hundred’, but restored within a year.
404	Alcibiades assassinated. Athens surrenders to Sparta and is governed temporarily by the so-called Thirty Tyrants, oligarchs supported by Sparta.
403	Returning Athenian exiles help defeat the Thirty in battle. Democracy restored at Athens.
399	Trial and execution of Socrates.
387	Traditional date for the founding of the Academy at Athens, with Plato as head.

387–386	The Spartan dispersal of the city of Mantinea.
386	The (Persian) King's Peace.
384	Aristotle is born. The earliest plausible date for the writing of the <i>Symposium</i> .
347	Plato dies.
338	Defeat of Athens at the battle of Chaeronea and the loss of her independence to Philip of Macedon.
323	Death of Alexander the Great of Macedon, taken as marking the end of the classical period of ancient Greece.

Glossary of Greek words

Where appropriate, entries are given in the order (1) verb, (2) noun, (3) adjective; verbs are given in the form of the present infinitive, nouns in the nominative singular, adjectives in the nominative masculine singular. In the transliteration of the Greek letters, Greek υ has been transliterated as u. Unless otherwise stated, footnote numbers refer to the translation. The meanings given relate to Plato's usage in the Symposium and are not exhaustive.

- agapān* (ἀγαπᾶν) to show devotion or regard, feel affection for. See footnote 51.
- agathos* (ἀγαθός) the general adjective for good in the sense of being suited to a desirable purpose or function, or being morally good. The corresponding abstract noun is *arete* and the antonym is *kakos*, bad. In early Greek *agathos* means 'well-born' or, in the political sense, 'aristocratic'. Since the ability to fight well was the attribute of the aristocrat (compare *kalos kagathos*) *agathos* can also mean 'a good fighter', 'brave'. In the plural it often means 'enjoyable material [things]', 'blessings'. The moral sense is often found in the *Symposium*, where 'what is good' sometimes has the abstract sense of 'the good'. If what is good is also attractive, *agathos* comes close in meaning to *kalos*. See also *chrestos*.
- aischros* (αἰσχρός) exciting an unfavourable reaction: bad; shameful, dishonourable; unattractive, ugly; wrong (see footnote 55). The antonym is *kalos*.
- aischunē* (αἰσχύνη) dishonour, shame; sense of shame, fear of disgrace.
- andreia* (ἀνδρεία) manly spirit, bravery; *andreios* (ἀνδρεῖος) manly, brave.
- androgynos* (ἀνδρόγυνος) a man-woman. See footnote 96.

<i>aporein</i>	(ἀπορεῖν) to be at a loss; <i>aporia</i> (ἀπορία) (in a philosophical discussion) the state of being in difficulties, unable to proceed further. This is the state to which Socrates' interlocutors are often reduced as a result of being cross-examined by him. See also <i>elenchein</i> .
<i>aretē</i>	(ἀρετή) virtue, goodness, excellence of every kind; since it often denotes non-moral excellence the common translation 'virtue' can sometimes be misleading. <i>Arete</i> denotes the several qualities required of a man if he is to be well thought of (see footnote 72); and since it occasionally denotes the reward of excellence it can also mean fame. In early Greek the excellence referred to was commonly courage, a meaning that persisted in Plato's day (compare <i>andreia</i>). See also the corresponding adjective <i>agathos</i> .
<i>aristos</i>	(ἄριστος) or <i>beltistos</i> (βέλτιστος) best, excellent, supreme in goodness; the superlative of <i>agathos</i> , good.
<i>aulos</i>	See footnote 18 and <i>Marsyas</i> in Glossary of names.
<i>banausos</i>	(βάνυσος) materialistic, relating to the work of artisans, usually in a derogatory sense.
<i>beltistos</i>	see <i>aristos</i> .
<i>boulesthai</i>	(βούλεσθαι) to wish, to want (followed by an infinitive).
<i>charizesthai</i>	(χαρίζεσθαι) to do a favour to, to gratify; euphemistically, of the younger male partner in a pederastic relationship, to allow sexual relations, to grant sexual favours.
<i>cheirurgia</i>	(χειρουργία) craft, work done with the hands.
<i>chrēstos</i>	(χρηστός) of persons, good, virtuous, deserving; a word of general commendation.
<i>daimōn</i>	(δαίμων) an unspecified god, particularly a lesser or local deity; divine power generally. See footnotes 151 and 152. <i>daimonios</i> (δαμόνιος) inspired by the divine.
<i>dēmiourgos</i>	(δημιουργός) a craftsman, practitioner, one who has technical skills.
<i>doxa</i>	(δόξα) opinion, what people think, a belief founded on appearance or impression; in Plato often contrasted with knowledge (see <i>epistasthai</i>); <i>doxa</i> can also mean reputation or fame.
<i>eidōs</i>	(εἶδος) form. At 210b the construal 'physical shape' or 'outward form' is commonly accepted; <i>eidōs</i> also has a philosophical sense where it is associated with the pursuit of the common and essential feature in a variety of things under consideration.

<i>eirōneuomenos</i>	(εἰρωνευόμενος) dissimulating, pretending ignorance, pretending not to understand; the adverb <i>eirōnikōs</i> (εἰρωνικῶς) has the same meaning. (The noun <i>eirōneia</i> (εἰρωνεία), dissimulation, is the source of English ‘irony’.)
<i>elenchein</i>	(ἐλέγχειν) to cross-examine so as to refute; <i>elenchos</i> (ἐλεγχος) (often spelt in the Latinized form <i>elenchus</i>) the procedure of question and answer employed by and associated with Socrates, in which an interlocutor’s beliefs are tested by logical argument until it becomes clear that these beliefs are inconsistent and an impasse is reached.
<i>epistasthai</i>	(ἐπίστασθαι) to know; <i>epistēmē</i> (ἐπιστήμη) true (i.e. rational) knowledge (compare <i>doxa</i>). In the plural, kinds of knowledge, including scientific knowledge. See also <i>mathēmata</i> .
<i>epithūmein</i>	(ἐπιθυμεῖν) to want very much, to desire; <i>epithūmia</i> (ἐπιθυμία) a strong wish or desire. Compare <i>eran</i> .
<i>erān</i>	(ἐρᾶν) to love passionately, be in love with, long for, feel desire for; <i>ho erōn</i> (ὁ ἐρῶν) (any)one who loves, lover in a general sense (compare <i>erastes</i>); <i>erōs</i> (ἔρως) passion, sexual love, desire; also the god Love (see footnote 24).
<i>erastēs</i>	(ἐραστής) lover in the sense of the senior partner in a male homosexual or pederastic relationship.
<i>ergon</i>	(ἔργον) deed, enterprise, activity, occupation, business, work.
<i>erōmenos</i>	(ἐρώμενος) (the) beloved, the younger partner in a male homosexual or pederastic relationship. Compare <i>paidika</i> .
<i>erōtica</i>	(ἐρωτικά) literally, things relating to love; translated according to context as the subject of, the study of, the science of, the influence of, or the mystery of love.
<i>eudaimonein</i>	(εὐδαιμονεῖν) to be happy; <i>eudaimonia</i> (εὐδαιμονία) happiness, flourishing, well-being; conceptions of <i>eudaimonia</i> need not be restricted to subjective feelings such as pleasure, but may involve, for example the (visible) attainment of prosperity, health and success in one’s aims (see Introduction p. xvi) see Introduction. The antonym is <i>kakodaimonia</i> (κακοδαιμονία), unhappiness, misfortune.
<i>genesis</i>	(γένεσις) coming-into-being, (the process of) generation; origin, parentage, birth.
<i>harmonia</i>	(ἁρμονία) harmony. See footnote 89.
<i>hubrizein</i>	(ὕβριζειν) to assault, insult, treat with contempt (see footnote 206); <i>hubris</i> (ὕβρις) violent abuse, insult; wantonness; <i>hubristēs</i> (ὕβριστης) someone sarcastic or insolent. In modern English usage <i>hubris</i> generally denotes arrogance leading to disaster.

<i>kakia</i>	(κακία) moral failing; <i>kakos</i> (κακός) the general adjective for bad; cowardly. In early Greek, low-born, ugly. The antonym of <i>kakos</i> is <i>agathos</i> .
<i>kalos</i>	(καλός) fine, beautiful, attractive, good-looking; good, noble; right. <i>kalōs</i> (καλῶς, adverb), well. Since what is attractive is likely to seem good to us, <i>kalos</i> can be close in meaning to <i>agathos</i> , good, though it usually has more of an aesthetic than a moral sense (but see footnote 55). Its antonym is <i>aischros</i> , ugly. In Plato ‘what is beautiful’ sometimes has the abstract sense of ‘the beautiful’.
<i>kalos kagathos</i>	(καλὸς καγαθός) (in full, <i>kalos kai agathos</i>) literally ‘fine and good’; it generally describes a man who has the virtues (see <i>arete</i>) of an aristocrat or leading citizen, including good looks, intelligence, wealth and social standing.
<i>kosmos</i>	(κόσμος) good order; ornament (see footnote 130); <i>kosmios</i> (κόσμιος) orderly; <i>kosmiōs</i> (κοσμιῶς, adverb), in an orderly fashion; decently.
<i>mathēmata</i>	(μαθήματα, plural of <i>mathēma</i> (μάθημα)) kinds of knowledge, especially scientific knowledge. See also <i>epistasthai</i> .
<i>meletē</i>	(μελέτη) practice, exercise; repeating a physical or mental act for the sake of training.
<i>monoeidēs</i>	(μονοειδής) in single form, uncompounded.
<i>mousikē</i>	(μουσική) any art that is the concern of the Muses, especially music or poetry; the arts or culture generally.
<i>neaniskos</i>	(νεανισκός) young man (after the beard has grown).
<i>nomos</i>	(νόμος) a law or rule; convention, custom, principle; <i>nomimōs</i> (νομίμως, adverb) lawfully; in accordance with custom.
<i>oikeiotēs</i>	(οἰκειότης) feeling of kinship and affection such as might exist between <i>oikeioi</i> (οἰκεῖοι), members of the same family or household.
<i>orthē doxa</i>	(ὀρθή δόξα) true or correct belief; right opinion.
<i>ouranios</i>	(οὐράνιος) heavenly. See footnote 53.
<i>paidika</i>	(παιδικά) (virtually synonymous with <i>eromenos</i>) beloved boy, the junior partner in a pederastic relationship.
<i>pais</i>	(παῖς) boy, youth, adolescent; the word cannot be applied to a young male after he is fully bearded. It was also used as the appellative of a slave of any age.
<i>peri</i>	(περί, preposition) in the matter of, concerning. See footnote 159.

<i>philein</i>	(φιλεῖν) to love; <i>philia</i> (φιλία) (generally non-passionate) love. These words have the most general application of all Greek words for love, describing good relations between people or states, friendship, affection and devotion, even including love between sexual partners. The beloved (<i>paidika</i> or <i>eromenos</i>) returned his lover's <i>eros</i> with <i>philia</i> . See footnote 51.
<i>philos</i>	(φίλος) a friend; anyone who is dear to another.
<i>philosophein</i>	(φιλοσοφεῖν) to do philosophy, to be a lover of wisdom, to pursue knowledge or wisdom; <i>philosophia</i> (φιλοσοφία) philosophy, the pursuit of knowledge or wisdom (see <i>sophia</i>); <i>philosophos</i> (φιλόσοφος) a philosopher, a lover of wisdom.
<i>philotimia</i>	(φιλοτιμία) love of honour, i.e. of public recognition; ambition. Also, the object of ambition, i.e. honour, credit.
<i>phronēsis</i>	(φρόνησις) wisdom (sometimes treated as synonymous with <i>sophia</i> , and even with <i>episteme</i> , knowledge); intelligence, understanding; <i>phronimos</i> (φρόνιμος) having intelligent understanding, wise.
<i>phusis</i>	(φύσις) nature, state, condition.
<i>poiēsis</i>	(ποίησις) creation; poetry; <i>poiētēs</i> (ποιητής) creator; poet.
<i>psuchē</i>	(ψυχή) (often written <i>psyche</i> in English). In Greek popular belief, the principle of life, which leaves the body at death; hence soul or spirit. It is also the principle of thought and feeling, and so can mean mind or consciousness. It is therefore variously translated according as one notion seems to predominate over another.
<i>sophia</i>	(σοφία) In early Greek it denotes knowledge of a skill, an expertise (technical or artistic); in Plato it often means intelligence, knowledge or understanding in a wide sense, of values and actions, such as how to live and behave; hence the common but sometimes misleading translation 'wisdom'. <i>sophos</i> (σοφός) expert; skilful; wise, clever, intelligent.
<i>sophistēs</i>	(σοφιστής) a sophist; originally a skilful practitioner of any art or craft (see <i>sophia</i>); by Plato's time it had come to denote an itinerant teacher who taught specialist branches of knowledge, in particular the rhetorical skill necessary for swaying large assemblies and for success in political life generally.
<i>sōphrosunē</i>	(σωφροσύνη) good sense, prudence; in a moral sense, temperance, self-control, moderation in the sense of a balance between extremes; <i>sōphrōn</i> (σώφρων) sensible, prudent; self-controlled, sober.

<i>technē</i>	(τέχνη) a profession, the practice of an art or craft; a skill; <i>technikos</i> (τεχνικός) one who skilfully practises an art or craft, a skilled practitioner.
<i>telos</i>	(τέλος) end, conclusion; sometimes in philosophical use, end in view or aim in the sense of <i>summum bonum</i> (Latin, 'maximum good'). It can therefore denote 'that for the sake of which' an action is pursued, or final goal.

Glossary of names

- Achilles** 10–11, 46, 61 The outstanding hero on the Greek side in the legendary Trojan War (see **Homer**), son of the sea-goddess Thetis and the mortal Peleus. After quarrelling with the Greek commander Agamemnon he withdrew from the fighting until his friend Patroclus was killed by the Trojan hero Hector. He then returned to battle and killed Hector in revenge. Not long after he was killed himself.
- Acusilaus** 9 A Greek prose-writer and compiler of genealogies who was born towards the end of the sixth century BC and about whom little is known.
- Admetus** 10, 46 See **Alcestis**.
- Aeschylus** 10, 10 n. 49 (525–456 BC) The earliest of the three famous Greek tragedians (the others are Sophocles and Euripides). Only seven of his plays survive complete. He may have been the first to make Achilles the lover of Patroclus (rather than the other way round).
- Agamemnon** 3–4 The commander of the Greek forces in the legendary Trojan War (see **Homer**) and a valiant fighter. His brother Menelaus was the husband of Helen whom the Trojan prince Paris carried off to Troy, thereby initiating the war. Menelaus is referred to at 174c as ‘a faint-hearted spearman’, but this is a phrase used in a taunt and Homer does not portray him as an inadequate warrior.

Agathon vii–viii, xii,
xiii, 1–6, 8, 27–32,
33–6, 51–2, 62–3

Described as a *neaniskos* (young man) at 198a, he was perhaps still under thirty, and famous for his good looks, when he won his first poetic competition in 416 BC. After the three great tragedians (see **Aeschylus**) he was the most successful and innovative writer of tragedies, but fewer than forty lines survive. His long-term relationship with Pausanias was well-known. When he left Athens for the court of Archelaus, king of Macedon, where he died probably before 399 BC, Pausanias went with him. Aristophanes in his comedies mocks him for effeminacy and the florid style of his lyrics. See also footnote 4.

Ajax 59

A Greek hero who fought at Troy and was invulnerable not only because of his fighting skills but because he wielded an all-enveloping body-shield.

Alcestis 10–11, 46

In Greek myth, the wife of Admetus, who was granted the possibility of avoiding a fated early death if he could find someone to die for him. Only Alcestis consented, and accordingly died. A version of this story is the subject of Euripides' play *Alcestis*, where she is brought back from death by the hero Heracles.

Alcibiades vii–viii,
xxvi–xxviii, 1, 51–63

(451–404 BC) An outstanding personality among his generation at Athens, he came from a rich and politically powerful family. From an early age he dazzled the Athenians with his good looks, wayward talent and brilliant personality, and was soon involved in politics. He was a distinguished army commander during the Peloponnesian War, but his personal ambition led him into acts of betrayal against Athens, and he became widely distrusted. At the time of Agathon's symposium he was at the height of his promise, and in the following year, 415 BC, was appointed one of the three commanders of the (eventually disastrous) Athenian expedition to conquer Sicily, which he had advocated. (See **Sicilian expedition**). At the same time he was implicated, with others of Socrates' acquaintance, in two religious scandals, the profanation of the mysteries and the mutilation of the

- herms (see **Mysteries** and **Hermes**). Thereafter he lived most of his life in exile supporting Athens' enemies, though with interludes when he was regarded with favour by at least some Athenians, and even became a military commander again briefly. His vacillating loyalty baffled the Athenians. In 404 BC he was assassinated abroad in obscure circumstances.
- Antenor** 61
- Aphrodite** 7 n. 24, 8,
11–12, 30, 40
- Apollo** 10 n. 42, 23, 31
- Apollodorus** viii, 1–3,
8
- Arcadia** 26 n. 109
- Ares** 30
- See **Nestor**.
- The Olympian goddess of seduction, sexual love and reproduction, frequently accompanied by Eros (Love, in the sense of powerful sexual desire). The role of Eros in Greek literature cannot easily be distinguished from that of Aphrodite, and Pausanias exploits the idea of their inseparability. The two stories about Aphrodite's birth (see footnote 53) indicate that the Greeks felt her to be a powerful goddess who came to Greece from the East but was under the control of Zeus. She was worshipped widely throughout the Greek world. Her husband was Hephaestus. Her affair with Ares, god of war, was a union of opposites. Pausanias' interpretation of Love as either 'heavenly' or 'common' is found only here.
- An important Olympian god, the son of Zeus and Leto, and a god of many functions. He is the archer-god and the god of music (see **Marsyas**) and sometimes of healing. He also founded the first oracle and can inspire a mortal with the gift of prophecy.
- The narrator of the whole of the *Symposium*. Beyond the fact that he was a friend of Socrates we know little more than is revealed at the beginning of this dialogue.
- The central region of the Peloponnese, where Mantinea was an independent city-state. The whole area was dominated by Sparta.
- The Olympian god of war, whose adulterous union with Aphrodite was witnessed by all the gods (see Homer's *Odyssey* 8. 266–366) after Aphrodite's husband Hephaestus, the god of fire

Aristodemus 2–3, 57,
63 and *passim*

Aristogiton 14

Aristophanes vii, xii,
xiii, 6, 8, 18, 22–7,
51, 57, 61, 63

Asclepius 19

Ate 29

Athena 31

Athens, Athenians,

Attica 1, 2, 13–16, 37,
46, 59 n. 218, 60

and metal-work, trapped them in a net he had contrived himself.

Of Cydathenaeum, a deme (district) of Athens. Apart from his being Apollodorus' source for the *Symposium*, little more is known of him than we are told in the dialogue.

See **Harmodius**.

(c.450–c.386 BC) The most famous Athenian writer of what is known as Old Comedy (comic plays written in verse). Eleven of these plays survive. His plots contain large elements of exaggeration and fantasy, and he parodies or satirises the leading figures of his day, including Agathon and Socrates himself. (See also **Socrates**.)

In Homer's *Iliad* Asclepius is a hero and a healer, but by Plato's time he was worshipped as a god and as the founder of medicine. Some families in which medicine was an hereditary skill traced their descent from him, but doctors from other families were also admitted to membership of these 'clans'.

See footnote 118.

The patron goddess of Athens, daughter of Zeus (see **Metis**) and born from his head. She was the virgin protector of the city, a war-goddess and helper of heroes. She was also the goddess of the female craft of weaving, in which she showed the practical intelligence of her mother Metis.

Athens was the chief city of the state of Attica, which forms the south-east promontory of central Greece. Although Athens was represented in legend as being ruled by kings in mythical times, like other Greek cities she was under the control of aristocrats who remained rich and powerful until their influence was weakened by the reforms of Solon at the beginning of the sixth century BC. The sixth century saw Athens governed by a succession of tyrants (see **Harmodius**), but by the beginning of the fifth century democracy in essentials was established (and lasted until Athens like the rest of Greece lost her independence to Philip of Macedon in 338 BC). In the fifth century

- aulos* 7, 51, 54
Boeotia 13

Brasidas 61

Chaos 8, 9

Charmides 62
- BC Athens built a strong navy which from the time of the defeat of the Persians at Salamis in 480 BC (see **Persia**) and for the rest of the century was the most powerful naval force in Greece. Athens' expansionist policy in the middle years of the fifth century roused fears in Sparta and precipitated the Peloponnesian war in 431 BC. (For Athens' unsuccessful attempt to win control of Sicily in 415–413 see **Sicilian expedition**.) The Spartans finally defeated Athens in 404 BC and briefly imposed an oligarchic government, the so-called Thirty Tyrants, with support from some Athenian aristocrats. However, Athens soon regained her democracy and her freedom, if not her former greatness, while Sparta became deeply involved in Persia. The Greek states lost their independence to Philip of Macedon in 338 BC. See also **Sparta**. See footnote 18 and **Marsyas**.
- An independent state of central Greece, bordering Attica on the north-west. For the battle of Delium see footnote 220.
- The outstanding Spartan army commander in the early years of the Peloponnesian war (between Athens and Sparta, 431–404 BC). After he was killed in 422 BC exceptional honours were accorded him.
- 'Yawning space'. In the Greeks' mythical cosmogony it was the first created thing, an intangible void beneath the Earth, full of darkness. Ancient authors differ in their interpretation.
- A young and good-looking Athenian aristocrat, one of Socrates' circle of admirers, a few years younger than Alcibiades (b. 451 BC). He was the son of Glaucon and (almost certainly) the brother of Plato's mother, and Plato gave his name as title to one of his own dialogues. Having been named as one in whose house the Eleusinian mysteries had been profaned (i.e. parodied) in 415 BC, he went into exile to avoid the death penalty and suffered the confiscation of his property. Returning later to Athens he sided with the Thirty

- Tyrants (see **Athens**) at the end of the Peloponnesian war and was killed in battle against the democrats in 403.
- Codrus** 46 A legendary early king of Athens who heard from an oracle that if he survived an enemy invasion Athens would be conquered. He therefore contrived his own death, so saving his country and ensuring that the kingship remained in his own family for the next three hundred years or so.
- Corybantes** 54 See footnote 208. Corybantes were followers of the orgiastic cult of the Asiatic goddess Cybele, a goddess of wild nature who was said to cure disease, and whose worship spread widely in the ancient world.
- Cronus** 29 In Greek myth, the supreme god of the generation of gods known as the Titans. These were the children of Uranus and Gaea (see also footnote 53). Cronus' consort was his sister Rhea. He was overthrown by his son Zeus, the supreme god of the generation of Olympian gods, whom the Greeks worshipped. In Plato's day to call anyone 'older than Cronus (or Iapetus)' meant that they were very old-fashioned.
- Daimon** 39 See footnote 151 and Glossary of Greek words.
- Delium** 60 In south-east Boeotia, the site of a battle between Boeotians and Athenians in 424 BC. See footnote 220.
- Diocles** 62 See **Euthydemus**.
- Dione** 12 A Titan goddess who, according to one story, became by Zeus the mother of Aphrodite. See footnotes 53 and 156.
- Dionysus** 6, 8 Also known as Bacchus. An Olympian god, the son of Zeus and Semele, the god of wine and ecstasy and of the surrender of everyday identity, the patron-god of drama. It was part of his myth that he was a late-comer to the Olympian pantheon. At the time of Aphrodite's birthday feast (see 203b) wine did not exist.
- Diotima** 37–50 Diotima seems to be represented as an itinerant 'wise woman'. It seems likely that she is a character invented by Plato. If she had really

Earth 8–9, 23

Eileithyia 44

Elis 13

Ephialtes 23

Eros

Eryximachus vii–viii,
xii, xiii, 4, 6–8,
18–22, 26–7, 30, 32,
53, 57, 63

Euripides 7, 30 n. 127,
33 n. 134

Euthydemus 62

Fate 44

existed it is improbable that she would have taught Socrates in the terms of Platonic philosophy that she uses. That she is said to come from Mantinea may be because the Greek word for seer, *mantis*, resembles the place-name. Her own name appears to mean ‘honouring (or ‘honoured by’) Zeus’.

See **Gaea**.

The goddess who presided over childbirth, together with one or more of the Fates. The latter decreed the infant’s destiny.

A largely rural Greek state in the north-west Peloponnese. The inhabitants were somewhat removed from the political events of the fifth century BC.

In Greek myth, a giant who, with his brother Otus, planned to overthrow the Olympian gods by piling Mount Ossa on Olympus and Mount Pelion on Ossa. They were destroyed by Zeus.

See **Love and Gods**.

Born c. 448 BC, a doctor and the son of a doctor, Acumenus. He was a friend of Phaedrus, and they were both accused of mutilating the herms.

(c. 485–406 BC) With Aeschylus and Sophocles the third of the three great Athenian writers of tragedy. We possess 19 of the 92 plays he is said to have written, and some lines and fragments of the rest. In their questioning of traditional attitudes his plays often reflect the ideas discussed by the intellectuals in Athens in the late fifth century BC. See also **Alcestis**.

A good-looking young man, son of Diocles, a devoted admirer of Socrates. (He is not Euthydemus the sophist after whom one of Plato’s dialogues is named.)

In Greek, *Moirai*, Fate in the sense of ‘Share’, ‘Apportionment’; the fate allotted to a person at birth by the goddess (or goddesses) of that name.

Gaea (Earth) 8–9,
23

The primordial goddess who appeared after Chaos, the first created thing. She produced a son Uranus ('Sky' or 'Heaven') and by him had many children whom he forced to remain unborn. She persuaded her youngest child Cronus to overthrow him by castrating him and releasing the children, known as the Titans. The union of Cronus with his sister Rhea produced the race of the Olympian gods.

Giants 23 n. 98
Glaucon (1) 2

See **Ephialtes**.

A friend of Apollodorus. We are not told his father's name or where he lives. For this reason and because the name recurs in Plato's family it has been suggested that this Glaucon would have been recognised as Plato's older brother of that name and Plato would not have needed to explain further. There are some chronological problems with this identification.

Glaucon (2) 62
Gods *passim*

Father of Charmides.

The gods primarily worshipped by the Greeks were the twelve known as the Olympians, a family of gods whose home was on, or in the heavens above, Mount Olympus. For the gods mentioned in the *Symposium* see individual entries for **Aphrodite**, **Apollo**, **Ares**, **Athena**, **Dionysus**, **Hephaestus**, **Hermes** (under **herms**), **Poseidon**, and **Zeus**, the supreme god. Eros (Love) was accepted as a god but was not one of the Olympians. Each of these gods had his or her sphere of interest and influence. Apart from these there were numerous less important deities, who were the subject of myths rather than the object of worship, some of them regarded as older than the Olympians by one or two generations (see **Cronus**). The Greeks generally regarded the Olympians as immortal beings who resembled humans in their desires but were vastly superior to them in size and power, as well as in beauty, wisdom and happiness. See also *daimon* in footnote 151.

Gorgias 32

(c. 485–c. 380 BC) A famous Greek sophist from Leontini in Sicily. From his arrival at Athens in

Gorgon 32

427 BC he had great influence on the thought and most markedly on the rhetorical style of many of his younger Athenian contemporaries, as is exemplified in Agathon's speech. Features of his style included short balancing clauses, antithesis and assonance, and skilful deployment of ingenious argument. Two short speeches of his, written to dazzle and provoke, still survive. Plato wrote a dialogue named after him in which he figures.

**Harmodius and
Aristogiton 14**

In Greek myth the Gorgons were three female monsters whose heads turned to stone anyone who looked at them. One of them, Medusa, was mortal. She was killed by the hero Perseus, who carried off her head to use on his enemies. He then gave it to the goddess Athena, who put it in the centre of her aegis (a kind of over-garment, indestructible and associated particularly with Athena).

Hector 10

'the tyrant-slayers'. Aristogiton was the lover of Harmodius, who was also pursued by Hipparchus, the brother of Hippias, tyrant of Athens. In 514 BC the pair planned to kill both the tyrant and his brother but killed only Hipparchus. They were captured and put to death by Hippias, but were celebrated in popular tradition for having put an end to the tyranny, although it survived until Hippias was driven out of Athens in 510 BC.

Helios (Sun) 23

In the *Iliad* (see **Homer**), celebrated as the leader of the Trojan army and their bravest hero during the Trojan War. When he kills the Greek warrior Patroclus, the latter's friend Achilles, who has been refusing to fight after a quarrel with Agamemnon, returns to battle to avenge him and kills Hector although he knows that he is thereby fated to be killed himself.

Hephaestus 25, 31

In Greek myth, the Sun, personified as a god, son of a Titan (see **Cronus**). The Greeks treated the sun with great respect but did not usually worship him. The Olympian god of fire and metal-working. Being lame he was something of an exception to the ideal of divine bodily perfection. His wife was

- Aphrodite. He was laughed at by the other gods for his lameness but respected for his skill. See **Ares**.
- Heracles** 7, 51 (The Romans called him Hercules.) Son of Zeus and a mortal woman, Alcmena, he was the most famous of the Greek heroes (though he was of a generation earlier than those who fought at Troy). His exploits (and especially his so-called 'labours', which were imposed on him as punishment for murder, were well-known and he was honoured throughout the Greek world. In Euripides' version of the story of Alcestis he successfully wrestled with Death at her tomb in order to restore her to her family. See also **Prodicus**.
- Heraclitus** xxi, 19 Of Ephesus in Asia Minor, a philosopher who was active around 500 BC. He is said to have compiled a book of aphoristic sayings which he deposited for readers in the temple of Artemis. These sayings were famously obscure. He thought that the world has an order which depends upon a balance of opposing forces and is in a constant process of change: 'all things are in a state of flux'.
- Hermes** viii Four-cornered stone or bronze pillars topped with the bearded head of the god Hermes and with a phallus on the front, set up in Athens as road or boundary markers and near public buildings and houses. They were intended to protect and avert evil influences, and were regarded with religious reverence, hence the shock felt when those in Athens were mutilated in 415 BC.
- Heroes, heroines** 7, 10 n. 48, 11 The children or descendants of unions between gods and humans, larger-than-life characters like Heracles situated in a legendary past. Stories about their lives and exploits dominate Greek myth.
- Hesiod** 8, 29, 47 With Homer, one of the two great early epic poets of Greece, who lived about 700 BC. His two surviving poems are the *Works and Days*, a didactic poem of advice for farmers, urging a godfearing life of honest hard work, and the *Theogony*, unique in surviving Greek literature as being a systematic

Homer 3, 4, 10 n. 49,
11, 15 n. 70, 23, 29,
30 n. 124, 32, 47,
52 n. 204, 58 n. 214,
60 n. 219

Iapetus 29
Iliad

Ionia, Ionians 14
n. 64, 60

Isles of the Blest 10,
11

King's Peace, The 14
n. 64

account of the origin and genealogy of the Greek gods, together with some of their myths. This work was regarded by the Greeks themselves as being authoritative.

The most famous Greek epic poet, who lived about 750 BC. Homer wrote two verse epics, the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. The *Iliad* is the story of an episode in the tenth and last year of the legendary Trojan War. The background is the siege by the Greeks of the city of Troy (also known as Ilium) in Asia Minor (a little south of the Dardanelles), when they were attempting to recapture Helen, the wife of Menelaus; she had eloped with Paris, a Trojan prince. The episode ends with the slaying of the Trojan prince Hector by the Greek hero Achilles. Homer's second epic, the *Odyssey*, deals with the aftermath of the war and the adventurous return to Ithaca from Troy of the Greek hero Odysseus.

One of the Titans. See **Cronus**.
See **Homer**.

Ionia comprised various Greek states along the central west coast of Asia Minor which had been colonised by Greeks from the mainland in about 1000 BC. From 545 BC they were under Persian rule, but by 416 BC, the 'dramatic' date of the *Symposium*, all the Ionian states were subject to Athens, and at the siege of Potidaea (see footnote 216) the Athenians had a large contingent of allies, most of whom were Ionian. However, after 386 BC and at the time Plato was writing the *Symposium*, Ionia was ruled by Persia (see footnote 64).

See footnote 48.

A pacification forced upon the warring Greek states in 386 BC by the Persian King Artaxerxes. It decreed that the Ionian Greek cities should be ruled by Persia, but that all other Greek cities should be independent, thus thwarting Athenian

- Laches** 60 attempts to regain an empire, and thereby benefiting Sparta. See also **Sparta**.
An Athenian general during the Peloponnesian war and friend of Socrates. Plato named one of his dialogues after him. He was killed in 418 BC at the battle of Mantinea.
- Love, Eros** *passim* (See footnote 151 and *eran* in glossary.) For the Greeks, and in the *Symposium*, Love is not entirely a human or a natural phenomenon. Some early Greek writers on cosmogony thought that Love was one of the earliest powers to come into existence, together with Chaos and Gaea (Earth). The pre-Socratic philosopher Parmenides also seems to have had Love as a cosmic principle. For the Greeks of Plato's day Love was recognised as a powerful god, but he was not as widely worshipped as the Olympian gods (see **Gods**). Mythological stories were not attached to him, and his parentage was a matter of debate. See also **Aphrodite**.
- Lyceum** 63 A gymnasium and public baths to the east of Athens outside the city wall.
- Lycurgus** 47 A legendary Spartan of early times, traditionally believed to have created his country's laws as well as their political and military systems. As one of the first law-makers he could be regarded as a benefactor to the whole of Greece.
- Mantinea** 26 n. 109, 37 A city of Arcadia created by the political unification of five villages. In 385 BC the Spartans put an end to their democracy and split the city into its original villages (see footnote 109), but they were reunited in 370 BC.
- Marsyas** 54–5 In Greek myth, a satyr who was the first to play the *aulos* or reeded pipe (see footnote 18). He challenged Apollo, god of music, to a musical contest, but was defeated and flayed alive.
- Melanippe** 7 A mythical Greek heroine about whom very little is known. She was the subject of two lost plays by Euripides.

Menelaus 3–4

Metis 39–40

Muse, Muses 31

Mysteries (1) viii, 54
nn. 207 and 208

Mysteries (2) xvii n. 19,
xxiii–xxiv, 48

Necessity 30 n. 123, 31
Nestor 61

Odyssey

Olympus 54

See **Agamemnon**.

‘Cleverness’; in Greek myth, the first wife of Zeus and the personification of cunning intelligence. When she became pregnant with Athena Zeus swallowed her, because he had been warned that a second child of hers would rule the universe, and thereby he combined supreme power and intelligence within himself. Athena was subsequently born from his head.

The goddesses of music, dance and literature, and the source of these skills in mortals. They were the daughters of Zeus and Memory. The poet Hesiod is the first to give them their names and number (nine).

i.e. mystery religions. Those wishing to join certain religious cults had to be initiated into their secrets or mysteries. The most famous mystery cult at Athens was centred on Eleusis in western Attica, and it was these mysteries that were ‘profaned’ i.e. parodied in private houses in 415 BC. In some cults a frenzy induced by wild music aided communion with the god.

The part of Socrates’ speech describing the progress of the lover through various stages in the understanding of beauty until the final stage of seeing absolute Beauty (sometimes called ‘the ascent of desire’) is expressed by Plato in the language of initiation into the Eleusinian mysteries, first into the Lesser Mysteries (209c–210a) and then into the Higher Mysteries (210a–212b) Personified as a primordial god.

In the *Iliad* (see **Homer**), a Greek hero and warrior of great age, famous in later times for wise and persuasive speech, as was the Trojan warrior Antenor.

See **Homer**.

A mythical musician from Phrygia variously described as the inventor of the *aulos* and of many melodies and as the pupil of Marsyas.

- Olympus, Mount** The highest mountain in Greece at the eastern end of a chain that forms roughly the northern boundary of Greece. The Greeks believed that their most important gods, the twelve Olympians, lived on Mount Olympus (or were sometimes thought of as dwelling in the heavens above Olympus), with Zeus's house occupying the summit.
- Orpheus 10** In mythical times, a singer and lyre-player of legendary skill. He tried to bring back his dead wife Eurydice from the Underworld by enchanting the powers there, and gained their consent, although in the story related by Phaedrus they released only her phantom. Orpheus broke the condition that he should not look back at her on the upward journey and lost her for ever. He met his own death at the hands of women, a punishment inflicted by the gods, according to Phaedrus, because he tried to enter the Underworld while still alive.
- Otus 23** See **Ephialtes**.
- Parmenides 9, 29** An important early Greek philosopher from Elea, a Greek colony in South Italy, and born c. 515 BC. In 450 BC he reputedly visited Athens and met Socrates. In the *Symposium* he is mentioned by Phaedrus and Agathon in the context of cosmogony, but we know very little about that aspect of his thought. He expounded his philosophy in a long didactic poem, some parts of which survive. He describes the world in terms of logic and the rules of language rather than in terms of belief.
- Patroclus 10** See **Achilles**.
- Pausanias vii, xi, xii, xiii, 6, 8, 11–17, 18, 22, 26, 57** Virtually nothing is known of this guest beyond his appearance in Plato. He was the long-term lover of Agathon with whom he left Athens for the court of Archelaus of Macedon.
- Peloponnese viii** The southern part of Greece connected with central Greece by the Isthmus of Corinth. The leading state of the Peloponnese in culture and military might was Sparta.

- Peloponnesian war** (431–404 BC) A power struggle between democratic Athens, a sea-power which after the Persian wars had developed a Greek empire and acquired considerable influence, and oligarchic Sparta, which had the most efficient land-army of the day and felt threatened by the rise of Athens. Athens' great days ended when she finally capitulated and became for a time the subject-ally of Sparta.
- Penia** 39, 40 'Poverty', personified as a divinity and according to Socrates the mother of Eros, Love.
- Pericles** 54, 61 (c. 495–429 BC) From the mid-fifth century until his death Pericles was the most influential politician at Athens, long remembered for his impressive oratory. His imperialistic policy was partly responsible for the outbreak of the Peloponnesian war which brought hardship to the Athenians. He was removed from office in 430 and died (of plague) in 429.
- Persia, Persian wars,** 47 n. 193 By the fifth century BC the Persian empire extended west as far as the eastern Mediterranean coast and into Thrace, giving the Persians a foothold in Europe. A revolt against Persian rule by Greeks living in Ionia led to a punitive expedition against mainland Greece by the Persian king Darius, which ended in his defeat at the hands of the Greeks at Marathon in 490 BC. In a second invasion in 480 Darius' son Xerxes, after victory at Thermopylae, was defeated at Salamis and Plataea, and the Persians made no further incursion into mainland Greece. Hostilities between Greeks and Persians continued intermittently until a peace treaty in 386 BC, the 'King's Peace', surrendered the Ionian Greek cities to Persian rule (see footnote 64).
- Phaedrus** vii–viii, xi, xii, xiii, 6–11, 17, 28, 29, 31, 32, 33, 50, 57, 63 Of the Attic district Myrrhinous, a member of Socrates' circle and friend of Eryximachus. He was one of those accused in 415 BC of profaning (i.e. parodying) the Mysteries, and went into exile, apparently returning to Athens in 404 BC. He died in 393.
- Phalerum** 1 See footnote 1.
- Phoenix** 1, 2 Nothing more is known of this guest than is said at 172b.

- Plato** ix–x, xi n.11;
translation
footnotes 4, 64,
92, 99, 109, 137,
151, 201, 227
(c.424–348 BC) Son of Ariston and Perictione, Plato was from a rich and politically important family. His older brothers Adimantus and Glaucon associated with Socrates, who exerted a powerful influence on Plato. At some point he renounced a career in politics in favour of philosophy. The story goes that he was invited to the court of Dionysius I, tyrant of Syracuse, who became angry when Plato spoke out too freely and had him seized and put up for sale as a slave. His friends paid the price and freed him. Returning to Athens he founded a mathematical and philosophical school, the Academy (on land dedicated to the Greek hero Academus). Here he wrote many philosophical works which still survive, in the form of dialogues in which Socrates figures largely but he himself not at all. Thus the ideas and arguments in these works are never represented as Plato's own. In 367 BC the young Aristotle, the future philosopher, came to the Academy to study and remained there until Plato's death in 348. Plato was buried in the Academy.
- Polymnia** 20
'She of many hymns', one of the Muses.
- Poros** 39–40
'Resource', personified as a divinity.
- Poseidon** 53
An important Olympian god, the god of the sea and also of earthquakes and horses. Alcibiades' oath 'by Poseidon' at 214d is unique in Plato but is found in Athenian comedy.
- Potidaea** 59, 60
A city on the north-east coast of Greece, a colony of Corinth which became a subject-ally of Athens. It revolted in 432 BC but was retaken by Athens in 430 BC after a siege.
- Prodicus** 7
From the Aegean island of Ceos, a sophist of great reputation in Athens in the late fifth century BC. He was the author of a well-known allegory in which the hero Heracles (Hercules) has to choose between two paths, one of virtue and the other of vice, and chooses virtue.
- Satyrs, Sileni** (sing.,
Silenus) 53–4, 55, 61
Mythical male inhabitants of the wild countryside, lewd, drunken and mischievous, the counterpart of nymphs with whom they make up the attendants

- of Dionysus, the god of wine. They were portrayed as snub-nosed and with protuberant eyes (like Socrates), and sometimes with animal features such as horse-tails.
- Selene (Moon)** 23 The Greek moon-goddess, associated with women and often with magic. Many different genealogies were ascribed to her, and some ancient writers stated that she was bisexual.
- Sicilian expedition** viii In 415 BC, during the Peloponnesian war, the Athenians were persuaded largely by Alcibiades to send an expeditionary force to Sicily, with the ultimate hope of controlling the island and the surrounding sea-ways. The expedition set sail in an atmosphere of anxiety caused by religious scandals (see **Mysteries** and **Hermes**), and within two years had been defeated by the Spartans and their allies with great loss of life and resources. This failure contributed to Athens' final defeat by Sparta in the war.
- Sileni, Silenus** See **Satyrs**.
- Sirens** 55 Enchantresses who, in the *Odyssey* (see **Homer**), lure sailors to their death by their beautiful singing. Odysseus stopped the ears of his crew with wax so that they did not hear the song.
- Socrates** *passim*;
see especially vii,
xiii–end, 33–6,
37–50 (469–399 BC) The best-known intellectual figure at Athens in the second half of the fifth century BC, complex and enigmatic. He exerted considerable influence on the rich young men, future politicians, with whom he associated, although he never claimed to teach, nor did he accept fees, unlike the sophists whom he superficially resembled in his apparent questioning of accepted beliefs. The oracle at Delphi declared that no one was wiser than Socrates, which Socrates interpreted as meaning that he alone was aware of his own ignorance. A stonemason by trade, he was married to Xanthippe and had three sons. He fought with distinction as a hoplite (a heavily-armed foot-soldier) in three famous engagements in the Peloponnesian war. He had a reputation for being impervious to pleasures and hardships alike. He

enjoyed good company, food and wine, but went about bare-footed and remained relatively poor. He did not play an active role in politics but when he was required on two occasions to act illegally he refused. He claimed that a 'divine sign' intervened to prevent him, as on some other occasions. Many of the young men in his circle who became prominent in politics turned against democracy (see **Alcibiades** and **Athens**), and it seemed to many citizens that his influence upon these men had been bad and was partly responsible for Athens' defeat in the Peloponnesian war. Perhaps because of this and also as a result of the hostile mockery of the comic playwright Aristophanes, Socrates was tried and convicted of impiety and of corrupting the youth, and was condemned to death. Escape abroad, though possible, would have been against the law, and so he remained in prison and drank the hemlock. Socrates wrote nothing himself. Many of his contemporaries, not only Plato, wrote dialogues in which he figured prominently, but most of these accounts have been lost. His interest was in ethical questions concerning the nature of virtue and of the good and happy life. He believed in the primacy of knowledge and the importance of definitions, but he is not represented as expounding views of his own. Rather he questions the views of others by his procedure of question and answer which has come to be known as the *elenchus* (see *elenchein* in Glossary of Greek words). Although the result of his enquiries seems in fact to have been negative, the example of his life and above all of his death have made him a paradigmatic philosopher.

Solon 47

(active in the early sixth century BC) A highly-regarded political figure at Athens, a social reformer and legislator who wrote about his work in poetry, some of which survives. Later Athenians commonly referred to all their laws as 'the laws of Solon'.

Sophocles 30 n. 123	(c. 496–405 BC) With Aeschylus and Euripides one of the three great Athenian writers of tragedy. Only seven of his plays survive complete.
Sparta, Spartans 13, 26, 47	Sparta was the chief city of Laconia and the name is commonly given in English to the whole city-state, situated in the south-east Peloponnese. By the beginning of the fifth century BC Sparta was the leading military power in Greece and played a vital part in defeating the Persians in the land-battles of 490 and 480 BC. However, the Athenian navy had also played a decisive role and Athens emerged from the Persian wars with enhanced prestige which she used to increase her power and influence. By 431 BC Sparta, feeling threatened by Athenian imperialism, entered into war with Athens (the Peloponnesian war) from which she eventually emerged victorious in 404. In 400 she embarked on an initially successful war against Persia, but at home she had to deal with a coalition of hostile Greek states, including Athens. In 386 Sparta was the chief beneficiary of the so-called ‘King’s Peace’, imposed by the Persian king, according to which the Greek cities on the west coast of Asia Minor fell under Persian rule again, but all other Greek cities were to be self-governing. By this decree Athens was prevented from building up an empire again, but Sparta was free to lead a voluntary alliance of Peloponnesian states.
Spirit	See Daimon .
Sun	See Helios .
Thetis 10	In Greek myth, a sea-goddess fated to bear a son more powerful than his father. Zeus gave her in marriage to a mortal hero Peleus, and their son was Achilles.
Titans	See Cronus and Zeus .
Trojan War	See Homer .
Underworld 10, 26	See footnote 48.
Urania 20	(‘Heavenly One’) the name of one of the Muses.
Uranus 11	See Cronus , Gaea and footnote 53.

Zeus 12 n. 53, 23,
24, 26, 31, 38, 39,
43, 58 n. 214, 62

In Greek myth and religion, the ruler of the Olympian gods, the son of the Titans Rhea and Cronus, whom he overthrew. Another Titan, Hera, was his wife, and he was the father of most of the powerful Olympian gods. After the overthrow of Cronus, Zeus and his brothers divided the universe between themselves by casting lots, and Zeus obtained the heavens as his domain. His weapon, the thunderbolt, was wielded only by him and symbolised his invincible power over gods and men. See also **Gods** and **Metis**.